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P A P E R

I N

COLONIES AND TRADE.

COLONIES AND TRADE.

IN the year 1774, the Society received, from one of their corresponding members in Jamaica, a Cask of Red Earth, a proper quantity of which was sent to several architects, for trial. No report of the success of the experiments was made, until the letters from Mr. Mylne, dated November 30, 1784, and February 28, 1786, were received; for which thanks were returned to Mr. Mylne.

As the useful properties of this Earth are now ascertained, and the discovery of such a material may be

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of very extensive service to the island of Jamaica, and other parts of the West Indies, although the expense of freightage may preclude the use of it here, it has been judged proper to publish the following letters from Mr. Mylne, on the subject; with a copy of the letter, written by the Secretary, to those gentlemen to whom the Earth was sent for trial, which letter contains an extract of the account, originally received by the Society, of the Earth, and manner of using it.

Adelphi

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Adelphi Buildings, Nov. 3, 1774.

S I R,

THE Society for the Encouragement of Arts, Manufactures and Commerce, have lately received from Jamaica, a quantity of Red Earth, and I am directed to send some of it to you, and request the favour of you to oblige the Society with your opinion of it. The gentleman from whom it comes, thinks it a kind of *Puzzolana*, and describes his method of using it as follows. “ To one measure of the Red Earth, add two of the same measure of well slackt lime, and one of sand, and then let them be well mixed and wrought like common mortar, with fair water, and so made up in a heap, but in about eight hours it will begin to acquire a hardness, and the

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heap must be cut down, and well wet with water, and smartly worked and mixed over again, and so smartly worked and wet morning and evening, for a whole week, before it is fit for use; and after it is laid on, it must be strictly attended while it dries and hardens, to close any crack that may appear in the drying, for about forty-eight hours, and then it is generally out of danger."

" But if any cracks, &c. should appear after it is quite dry, as suppose the covering of a building, cistern &c. a labourer, with a little sand or brick dust, and a little common whitewash, thrown over the crack and smartly rub'd in with a brickbat, or sandy stone, the crack will soon disappear, and the work will be as good as ever."

" Cisterns, Reservoirs, Canals, and all manner of conveniences to collect rain water
and

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and retain it, of any reasonable dimensions, may at a very small expense be made, and completely finished with this composition, to contain and secure rain water."

" By means of this composition, a mortar may be made (far exceeding any other) wherewith to lay the foundation, and raise the superstructure of any dam, bridge, or guttering; and in short, any kind of building where water, or any kind of liquid is to be concerned, because the soft new made mortar will harden, and soon become like a stone totally immersed in water."

" Of this composition may be made the best coverings for all manner of buildings, witness my own house, that has been covered with this composition (though not at that time brought to its present perfection

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tion) these twenty years, and is not a pin the worse."

"In regard to matters of pleasure, Terras Walks, Canals, Flower Pots, Urns, Obelisks, Statues, and even Colossal Statues, and other ornaments for gardens, may be made of or with this composition, as it resists rain, and every sort of moisture, and nothing but violence will make the least impression, so that the five orders of architecture, with their various ornaments, may be most elegantly expressed on the outside, or inside of buildings, in the plaisterers way, and last for ages, if no violence is used to them."

"In covering a building, I would choose to lay it on six inches thick, upon a flat strong framed well lathed roof, as it will shrink in drying, and is the best
and

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and cheapest covering I know of, as I have experienced ever since 1747."

Thus far the account from the person who sent it, and beg leave to say that if you require any larger quantity for tryal than is now sent, it will be furnished to you by your applying to the Society.

I am Sir,

Your very humble servant,

SAMUEL MORE, SECRETARY.

MR. MYLNE.

S I R,

S I R,

I have made a fair trial of the Puzzolana Earth, received some years since from the Society for Encouragement of Arts, Manufactures and Commerce, and although it has lain long by me, it turns out a very good substitute to Dutch Terras, or Italian Puzzolana, for works immersed in water. As you have informed me, there still remains a quantity of it in the Society's possession; I shall be glad of some to make further trials in other situations, and shall be glad to know the particular place in Jamaica from whence it came, and the christian name of Mr. Brown, by whom it was sent. It was tried against some British materials, and proved far better than any of them.

I am Sir, your very humble servant,

ROBERT MYLNE.

New River Head

Nov. 30, 1784.

MR. MORE.

S I R,

I have it now in my power to write you decidedly on the Red Earth, of which I received a specimen for trial in water-works.

I have put it to very severe trials, and have found it answer extremely well, as a substitute for Dutch Terras, or Puzzolana Earth from Italy, they are all three volcanick substances, and have the same peculiar qualities. Besides what I received from you, I obtained by means of a friend, a quantity from Jamaica, which on comparative trials, proved the same as that you sent me, it is found in vast quantities on the estate of Mr Brown, in the parish of St. Elizabeth, in Jamaica. There are many acres of it, for it lies on the surface of the ground; in this it is different

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ferent from Puzzolana, which lies in Strata, under ground like coal. Dutch Terras is a *Tufa* Stone, found on the rocky banks of the Rhine, and reduced to powder, by Mills in Holland.

Mr. Brown, who sent this Jamaica Terras to the Society, is now dead, and the estate on which it is found is called Dettingen and is now the property of his son, a very intelligent gentleman.

On enquiry into the means of bringing it into this country I find the expense of carriage to the water-side there, and freight to this country will prevent the use of it here. I wish it however to be made as publick as possible. It may be of use to the inhabitants of the West-India Islands and some other of our colonies.

I am Sir, your very humble servant,
New River Head, ROBERT MYLNE.
Feb. 28 1786.